

15
A FUNERAL
SERMON

Occasioned by the
DEATH
Of the Reverend

Mr. DANIEL MAYO, *M. A.*

Who departed this Life *June 13.*

Preached at

SILVER STREET,

June 24. 1733.

By THOMAS BURES.

Published at the Desire of the Congregation.

L O N D O N :

Printed for MARY KING, at the Bible and Crown
in Forestreet, near Great Moregate. 1733. Pr. 6d.

W. Musgrave!





HEBREWS XIII. vii.

Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God : whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.



HERE is no need that we should look back into the context. It is sufficient to observe, that the inspired penman of this Epistle is at the close of it recommending to the believing *Hebrews* sundry Duties, and among others in the words that have been read a becoming Respect to their deceased Ministers. The latter part of the verse shews us, that

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he is speaking of such as had finished their course, and accordingly the first clause had been better rendred, *Remember them who have had the Rule over you*, or as it is in the original, *Remember your Rulers*. Who they were can't with certainty be determined nor is it very material: as there is nothing said of them, but what may be accommodated to good and faithful ministers of the Gospel in every age; so that which is enjoined with reference to them, will be always proper for Christians as a token of their just Regard to such, after God by his Providence has removed them out of the World.

In discoursing upon this Subject which is manifestly suitable to the present melancholy Occasion, I shall distinctly consider the account given of those ministers that the believing *Hebrews* had been favoured with, and then the Duties that are urged as owing to them. I begin with the first.

I. The

I. The account given of their Ministers, in which we may particularly take notice of their Name or Title, their Work, and their Walk. They are stiled Rulers, are said to have spoken the word of God, and it is intimated that their behaviour had been agreeable. Of each briefly.

I. Their Title is that of Rulers or Guides according to the Marginal Reading. The word ἡγούμενοι is of so large an extent, as to be applicable to all who are vested with authority of any kind. But it is here evidently put for Ecclesiastical Governors, officers in the Christian Church, and the same persons are intended as in other places of Scripture are called Bishops or Pastors. These rule under Christ, have a power derived from him, and act in subordination to him for the advancement of his Kingdom. Indeed as his Kingdom is not of this World, so their power does not interfere with, but is of

a quite different nature from the power of the civil Magistrate. They must
 1 Pet. v. 3. *not lord it over God's Heritage for they*
 2 Cor. i. *have no Dominion over their Faith but*
 xxiv. *are Helpers of their Joy.* They have
 no authority to enact Laws, but only to
 promulgate and explain the Laws of
 Christ. and to press obedience to them
 by perswasive arguments, not to en-
 force it by outward violence. They
 are *the Rulers of the Household who*
 Mat. xxiv. *are to give them their meat in due season,*
 1 Cor. iv. 1. *Stewards of the mysteries of God. They*
 1 Pet. v. 2. *feed the flock of God taking the oversight*
of it. They are Guides (and that pro-
 perly expresses the nature of their Go-
 vernment) who are to go before others,
 and lead them in the ways of Truth
 and Holiness by instruction from the
 word of God. Accordingly it is said
 that

2. These Rulers or Guides had spo-
 ken unto them the word of God. They
 did not propagate their own fancies
 but

but made known the mind and will of God. We are not indeed to suppose that this was their *only* Business, however we may justly look upon it as their *principal* work : and as they were chiefly taken up with a work of this nature, so therein they especially answered the end of their office, and served the best Interests of those to whom they ministered. Let us here observe that it is the word of God which ministers have in charge to deliver ; that it is a considerable part of their work to preach the word of God ; and that this is an ordinance appointed for saving Good to the souls of men.

I. That which ministers have in charge to deliver is the word of God. The word which came from him reveals the way of Salvation thro' a Redeemer, and as accompanied with the efficacious influences of the Holy Spirit promotes the salvation of all them that believe. This word should dwell richly in
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in them in all wisdom as it is able to make them perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works. The whole of it is to be preached and nothing but what is agreeable to it or founded upon it. The faithful dispensers of the word will not *shun to declare the whole counsel of God: they would keep back nothing that may be profitable to their Hearers*, and they would not deliver their own inventions, *but what they have received from the Lord: they would not teach for Doctrine the commandments of men but only to observe all things that Christ has commanded.* The word of God is the only Standard of Truth and Rule of Practice, and as far as the instructions of ministers appear to be agreeable to it, they are to be received not as the word of men but as they are indeed the word of God.

2. To preach the word of God is the chief part of a ministers work.

This

This they are commanded to do. Go,
teach all nations. I charge thee before ^{Matth.}
God and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall ^{xxviii. 19.}
judge the Quick and the Dead at his
appearing and his Kingdom. Preach
the word, be instant in season and out of ^{2 Tim. iv.}
season, Give attendance to Reading, to ^{1, 2.}
Exhortation, to Doctrine. As they are
 commanded to do it, so they are direct- ^{1 Tim. iv.}
 ed how to do it. ^{13.} *If any man speak let*
him speak as the oracles of God, not on- ^{1 Pet. iv.}
ly the pure word of God but with sui- ^{11.}
table Seriousness, Reverence and Au-
thority. In Doctrine shew uncorruptness
gravity, sincerity, sound speech that ^{Tit. ii 7.}
cannot be condemned; making it to ap-
pear that thy aim is not to set off thy-
self or to please men, but to advance
the Honour of God, the interest of
the Redeemer, and the welfare of souls,
Study to shew thyself approved unto God,
a workman, that need not to be ashamed, ^{2 Tim. ii.}
rightly dividing the word of Truth: giving ^{15.}
to every one their Portion in due sea-
son. They would be unfaithful to their
 Trust

Trust, and may justly fear the consequence if they neglect to do it, *a necessity is laid upon me and wo unto me if I preach not the Gospel.* They have encouragement to hope for assistance, acceptance and success in the due discharge of this Work. He who has called them to it, will afford them his Presence.

3. The preaching of the word is God's ordinance for the Good of souls. The word is a means of converting sinners, and of perfecting the Saints.

James i. 18. *Of his own will begat he us by the word of Truth that we should be a kind of first*

John xvii. 1 k. *fruits of his Creatures. Sanctify them by*

1 Pet. ii. 2. *thy Truth, thy word is Truth. As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby.* It has pleased God not only to write unto us the great Things of his Law and Gospel; but he has taken care that those Things should be often inculcated by some whom he has appointed for that

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that service, that they might come with more power and make a deeper Impression: and it is the preaching of the Word that is most usually made effectual to Salvation. *By the foolishness of preaching*, by that method which is commonly accounted foolishness, *he saves them that beleive. Faith comes by Hearing, and Hearing by the word of God.* This is designed for the beginning a work of Grace, as we may gather particularly from that known passage, where Christ says to the Apostle Paul. *I have appeared unto thee for this purpose to make thee a Minister and a Witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in which I will appear unto thee. Delivering thee from the People and from the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee. To open their Eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of Sins, and inheritance among*

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them

1 Cor. i.
21.

Acts xxvi.
16, 17, 18,

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them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

This is likewise designed for the carrying on a Work of Grace where it is begun. He (Christ) gave some Apostles: Ephes. iv. 11, 12, 13 *and some Prophets: and some Evangelists: and not only such extraordinary Officers; but as it is added, Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying the Body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the Measure of the stature of the Fulness of Christ, or to be Christians of full maturity. Thus we see that the preaching of the Word is designed for our spiritual Benefit.*

Indeed it is to be considered only as a means: the efficacy of the Word is not to be ascribed entirely to any virtue of its own, nor to the good intention and abilities of those who are employed

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ed in the dispensing it; but depends upon the Blessing of God. When the Word is in any measure or upon any Persons made successful, God must have the Glory of it, and he has committed the Dispensation of his Word to weak and frail creatures, partly upon this account, that he might secure to himself the Glory of its Success. *We*^{2 Cor iv.} *have the Treasure in Earthen Vessels,*^{7.} *that the Excellency of the Power may be (appear to be) of God, and not of us.* He will for that Reason speak to us, by men subject to like passions and infirmities as others, and 'tis a very remarkable instance of the Honour that God puts upon the Ministry of men which we find recorded in *Acts* x. 4. 5, 6. An Angel appears to *Cornelius* to assure him, that his Prayers and Alms were accepted, but directs him to *Peter* for Instruction in the Christian Faith. *Thy Prayers and thine Alms* (says the Angel) *are come up for a memorial before God.* And now send men

*A FUNERAL SERMON for
to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose
surname is Peter: and he shall tell thee
what thou oughtest to do.*

That is the second thing the Work
of these spiritual Guides, they had spoken
the Word of God.

3. We are further to consider their
Walk, which it is intimated was suitable
to the Character they bore, and
the Work wherein they were engaged,
when they are propounded as Examples
to their People. They lived as
they preached, and taught by their
Example as well as by their Doctrine.
The ministers of the Gospel should be

1 Tim. iv.
12.

*patterns to others. Be thou an example
to Believers in Word, in conversation, in
charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in purity.*

Tit. i. 7.

In all things shewing thyself a pattern of

1 Pet. v. 2.

*Good Works. Not as being Lord's over
God's Heritage, but examples to the
Flock. They, who having felt the
power of Divine Truths upon their
own*

own hearts, do express it in a regular behaviour, are certainly most likely to do good: so they may hope that a Divine blessing shall attend their Ministrations, or if they have not the success they desire, shall however deliver their own Souls. Whereas on the other Hand, those who by their conduct give ground to think, that they don't themselves believe what they deliver, it can scarce be thought will perswade others to believe it; or if the Blessed God who is a Sovereign Agent should at any time make use of unsanctified ministers for the Conversion of Sinners, and the building up his people; yet they themselves after all will be castaways. As for the Persons referred to in the Text, their conversation was becoming the Gospel of Christ, their exemplariness confirming and encouraging to them over whom they presided: they were burning and shining Lights.

Thus

Thus much for the Account which is here given of the Ministers that the believing *Jews* had been favoured with.

2. Let us consider the Duties recommended with reference to them. And these are three, 1. Remember them, 2. Follow their Faith, 3. Consider the end of their Conversation. The second I apprehend is the Principal, the first seems to be recommended in order thereunto, and the last by way of motive.

1. One Thing incumbent upon Christians with reference to these who have been their spiritual Guides is to *Remember them*. There is a Respect owing to their memories which should be shewn in such ways as these; in a readiness to speak well of them, and to bless God for them, in bewailing the Loss of them, and especially in following them.

1. Be

I. Be ready to speak well of them.

The Memory of the just, says Solomon, is Prov. x. 7. *blessed, is praise worthy, and should be highly esteemed. This is a part of the Dignity of the Saints, especially of such as have been eminently pious and useful, that they are remembered with Respect, when they are dead. Not only shall they have honour and praise at the Appearing of Jesus Christ, when the judge shall say to them before men and Angels: Well done Good and Faithful Servants, and give them a crown of Glory that fadeth not away: But the Blessed God orders it thus usually in his Providence, that their memories should be honoured on earth. It is threatned in Scripture as a Curse upon the Wicked that* *their Remembrance* Job. xi. 17. *shall perish from the Earth, and they shall have no Name in the Street. The Face of the Lord is against them that do evil to cut off the Remembrance* Psalm xxxiv. 16. *of them from the Earth. And on*
the

the other Hand it is promised as a
 Psalm 112. Blessing to the Righteous, *their Remem-*
brance endureth for ever and their Horn
shall be exalted. And tho' some may
 seek to eclipse their Righteousness, yet
 sooner or latter God will bring it forth
 as the Light and their Judgment as the
 Psalm xxxvii. 6. Noon Day. They shall have a good
 Name in this World which is rather to
 be chosen than great Riches and is much
 better than precious Oyntment.

And as this is their Dignity, a part
 of the Reward of their piety and Un-
 fulness; so it is the Duty of survivors
 to bless their memory, to make honour-
 able mention of them. We should
 honour them that fear the Lord while
 living, and honour their memory
 when dead; and particularly this is
 what we owe to our spiritual guides,
 who have obtained mercy to be faith-
 ful. If they have been instruments of
 spiritual Good to us, that is to be con-
 sidered as a peculiar obligation upon us
 to

show respect to their Memory, and in this way among others.

2. Bless God for them. Be thankful to him for past Mercies, and confine not your gratitude to your present enjoyments. While we reflect upon their Worth and Usefulness; the Pleasure we had in them, and the Benefit, we trust, we received by their Ministrations, we must bear this in mind, that they were no other, no better, than God made them. All that was good in them was derived from God, the fountain of Goodness, and they were but instruments in his hand of Good to us. And therefore we have reason to bless him, for those gifts and graces which appeared in them, and for the Success of their Endeavours.

3. Bewail your Loss in their Removal. *When Samuel died, 'tis said, all Israel lamented him.* And in the New Testament we read, that devout men carried Stephen to his Burial, and made

1 Sam. xv.

Acts viii. 2.

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great

great Lamentation over him. It is an ill Symptom, if when *the Righteous per-*
 Isa. lvii. 1. *ish no man layeth it to Heart.* They, it is true, when they put off the Body, are made perfect in Holiness, and enter into perfect Peace, but then their work is done, their usefulness and serviceableness is at an end here: and we may greatly need their Instructions, their Prayers, their Prudence, their Experience; the Removal of such is a depriving us of our Defence, a thinning our Glory: it is often a token of the divine Displeasure, and a sign of some approaching Storm. Upon these Accounts when God is pleased to take away good and useful Persons from us, it is matter of great lamentation, and to be bewailed.

4. Be sure to remember them so as to follow them. The *Scribes and Pha-*
 Mat. xxiii. *risees* pretended a great Veneration for the memory of their Prophets, they built their Tombs, and garnished their
 Sepulchres;

Sepulchres; but at the same time neglected to regard what their Prophets had taught them, and to imitate their Piety and Virtue; which would have been a much better way of paying Honour to them for whom they professed the highest Respect, as well as for their own Advantage. Our Respect for deceased Ministers is best shown in a sincere Regard to their Instructions, and a careful Imitation of their Excellencies: and without this it will signify little, that we make honourable Mention of them, or even erect Monuments to their Memory. Indeed we condemn ourselves, while we commend the Sermons that we do not practice, or commend the Patterns that we don't imitate. The Remembrance of our spiritual Guides that seems to be especially intended in the Text, is a Remembrance of the Word of God which they have spoken, and of their holy conversation agreeable to the Word, in order to a following their Faith.

Which is the thing next to be considered.

2. It is expected of Christians that they *follow the Faith* of their spiritual Guides. By which we may understand both the holding fast the profession of that Faith which they preached, and the imitating them in that Faith in the exercise and under the influence whereof they lived.

1. Hold fast the Profession of that Faith which they preached: that Faith which was once delivered to the Saints. It is not meant, that Christians should give up themselves absolutely to the conduct of any Man's judgment or opinion in Matters of Faith. They are not only allowed, but indeed required to examine what they hear from their Ministers by the sacred Scriptures; their Faith ought not to be founded on the Authority of Men, but upon the Testimony of God in his Word. This
Word

Word they to whom the Apostle in our text refers, had spoken: and all Believers are undoubtedly obliged to continue in the Word, or in those things which they have learned and been assured of from it. Be stedfast in the Truth, abide in the Doctrine of Christ. Guard against a total Apostacy and likewise any partial Declensions from it. Give up no Truth for the getting or saving any secular Interest. Labour after a settled judgment, a stability of Mind, especially in the great and essential points of your Holy Religion. Many Exhortations we have in Scripture to this purpose: *Be not carried about with divers and strange Doctrines:*^{9.} *for it is good that the Heart be established with Grace, not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. That ye be no more Children,*^{Ephes. iv. 14.} *tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, by the sleight of Man and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. Be-*^{2 Pet. iii. 17.} *ware*^{17.}

A FUNERAL SERMON *for*

ware least ye being led away with the error of the Wicked, fall from your own, or your proper, stedfastness. Again,

2. Imitate them in that Faith, in the Exercise and under the Influence whereof they lived. As the Life which they lived was by the Faith of the Son of God, thereby they were helped to discharge the work, to get through the Troubles, to enjoy the Privileges, and to answer the end of the Christian Life: see that you cherish this Grace, and exercise yourselves to it. Live in dependance upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and upon God through him, as to all concernments whether of a spiritual or Temporal Nature. See that your Faith be attended with such good Fruits, as theirs was: that it purifies your Hearts, works by Love, and overcomes the World. They were holy in all manner of Conversation, they manifested a hearty and fervent Love to God and Man, they were willing to
deny

deny themselves for the Honour of their Lord, to take up with a mean Condition, and to suffer reproach, yea they did not count their own Lives dear to them, so that they might finish their Course with joy, and the Ministry which they had received. They gladly spent themselves and were spent in the service of Christ and for the Good of Souls. Walk as you have had them for examples, and study to adorn the Doctrine of God your Saviour in all things.

We should be followers of them who thro' Faith and Patience inherit the Promises. Indeed Christ is the only perfect Pattern who knew no sin, but was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from finners. The best of Men and the best of Ministers have their failings and infirmities, and therefore our imitation of them must not be universal, but with some restriction; we must follow *their Faith, follow them no farther than they followed Christ.*

But

But tho' there is no example among them who are but Men without a Blot, yet the Examples of excellent Persons who have gone before us, and are got to a better world, are of great use to scatter our Fears, to support us under all our Difficulties; and to encourage us in the vigorous Prosecution of our Duty.

If such have stood in any near Relation to us, and were well known by us, as we have had the best Opportunity of observing how they behaved: so the Respect we bear to their Memory should put us upon striving to imitate them. And the shewing our Respect to them after such a manner, will be most pleasing to God and profitable to ourselves. We shall thus answer the Design of God in affording us such Patterns: and by behaving as they have done we may hope to become sharers with

with them in the Happiness that they now enjoy.

3. As a Motive to the forementioned Duty the Apostle adds, *considering the end of their conversation*, taking special notice of their exit. Some have apprehended, because there is such a particular mark put upon the End of their Conversation, that the Persons referred to were martyrs for the Christian Faith, sealed it with their Blood. But there is no reason, I suppose, why it may not be understood more generally. And by the end of their conversation may be meant the manner in which they finished their course, and the happy conclusion of it.

1. We may take the Expression as referring to the manner of their Death. And with respect to good Men and to good Ministers, there are two things very observable as to that, viz. that
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they die in Faith, and then that they die in Peace.

Heb. xi.

13.

1. They die in Faith, as was said of the Patriarchs. They persevere in the Faith to the last. The believing to Salvation, is a believing to the end.

— x. 28.

We are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. This was remarkable in those spiritual Guides spoken of in the text, their faith held out, notwithstanding the Trials and Assaults it met with.

Pf. xxxvii.

37.

2. They die in Peace, *Mark the perfect man and behold the upright; for the end of that man is Peace.* They are not only in a state of Peace with God, but ordinarily, at the close of their Days especially, have some good Measure of inward Peace. If before their Days have been dark and cloudy, yet their last Day often proves bright and comfortable, they can meet the messengers

sengers of Death, and receive its Summons with a holy security and serenity of Mind. *The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the Righteous* Prov. xiv. 32.
hath Hope in his Death.

2.) The end of their conversation may signify the happy issue of it. When they have finished their Course they leave a world of sin and sorrows and snares, a world that lies in wickedness, in which they had their share of the common Troubles of Life, and were peculiarly exposed to the Malice of Satan, and his Instruments: They lay down a vile and corruptible Body, and at the same time are freed from a Body of Sin. And from thenceforth they have nothing in themselves, or from without, to disquiet them or give them the least uneasiness. Their spirits are made perfect, and they enter into their Master's Joy. They are with Christ, to be with whom is infinitely better, than to be in the most

agreeable circumstances on Earth.

Rev. xiv.
13.

Thus blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, they rest from their Labours, and their Works follow them. And when the

2 Pet. v. 4.

chief Shepherd shall appear, those undershepherds, who have been diligent and faithful, shall receive a crown of Glory that fadeth not away. They that

Dan. xii. 3.

are wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.

This is some Account (very brief indeed) of the Happy End of Good Men and Faithful Ministers. How Natural is it upon such a view of their case to wish that we may die their Death, that our latter end may be like theirs. But let us then admit this Thought, that in order thereunto we must live their Life, take the same Course that they did. If we are desirous and determin'd through Grace to follow them, we may hope at length to finish well, as they have
done

done, and to be partakers of the same blessedness. Frequently call to Mind, Christians, how they have been enabled to hold out to the last, and it may be to pass through the dark Valley of the shadow of Death without Fear, especially view by an eye of Faith the Happiness they have reached, which more than makes amends for all the Troubles and Difficulties they met with in their way : This will surely be a good means of confirming your Faith, of strengthening your Hope, of animating you with Courage, of arming you with Patience as well as of quickning you to Diligence and Perseverance.

I would now apply what has been said, to the sorrowful Occasion; the Death of my dear, and much honoured Father, and of your excellent and very worthy Pastor. I shall not attempt to give you any Memoirs of his Life, nor is it much that I shall say as to his Character, being sensible how unequal

unequal I am for the Subject, and indeed this will be the less needful as you have it drawn up by a much better Hand. However allow me to observe a few things concerning him, agreeable to what you have been hearing. He was a skilful Guide, a faithful steward in the House of God; and tho' he was far from pretending to have Dominion over your Faith, yet he knew how to keep up that Authority, which was suitable to his Character, and for your Edification. Preaching the Word is, as you have heard the main Business of a Minister, and he was furnished with many valuable gifts for the discharge of that Work, took great Delight and abounded in it. He shewed himself to be a Workman that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. He was instant in season, and out of season, ever ready to embrace all Opportunities for preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom: and by reason of a strong Constitution,
could

could go through much Labour, with less Fatigue than many others. He did not shun to declare the whole Counsel of God, but insisted chiefly upon those things, that are most necessary and of the greatest use. The matter of his Sermons was well digested; and they were delivered with great Life and Vigour. No one that ever heard him, I believe, could forbear thinking that what he said came from the Heart, and was designed, as well as had a manifest tendency, to do good. It pleased God to give him a general acceptance, and, I doubt not, he had many seals of his Ministry.

And he lived as he preached. His Conversation was becoming the Gospel of Christ, he adorned the Doctrine of God his Saviour in all things, and was truly exemplary in the Duties of the first and second Table. He was a kind and tender Husband, an affectionate and indulgent Father, a sincere and faithful Friend.

Friend. I might add that he was a Person of an excellent Temper, of a very active and publick Spirit: zealous for the Truth and a lover of Peace. He was well satisfied in his own sentiments, and never shy of declaring them upon all proper Occasions; but as he followed the Convictions of his own Mind, he was willing that others should do so likewise, and had a hearty Respect for all who held the Head. In a word he was a burning and a shining Light.

He died in the Faith in which he had lived. And his End was Peace, when sensible that it drew near, he declared, that he had no uneasy Fears but good Hope of a Blessed Immortality: and we have no room to question but that his hope was well grounded, and that having done his Masters work he is now entred into his Joy.

Let

Let me exhort you to remember him, who has had the Rule over you and spoken to you the Word of God. I am sure we of this Congregation are highly obliged to pay great Respect to his Memory: and they ought to be accounted very disingenuous, who shall quickly, or easily, forget him. Let us bless God for the Help and Advantage we may have had by his Ministrations. Let us be duely affected with our Loss: Surely there is just cause for mourning, at the removal of so valuable and useful a Person as he was, though not upon his Account, yet upon our own. Let us mourn for our sins that may have been the Occasion of this sad and heavy stroke. Let us mourn that we made no better improvement of his Labours, and under a sense of the Divine Displeasure that this Breach may be the Indication of. And then let us remember what we have received and heard, and hold fast; con-

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tinue

tinue in the things which we have learned from the Word of God, as dispensed by him. Finally let us imitate what we saw in him that was excellent, and follow him as he followed Christ; considering the end of his Conversation.

I shall close with offering two things to your serious Thoughts, may they have their due weight!

I. You must meet your Ministers again in the great Day. All, both Ministers and People, must appear before the Tribunal of Christ. They must give an Account how they have discharged their Duty to you: and you must give an Account how you have improved by their Labours. A joyful meeting will faithful Ministers then have with their faithful people, with those who were converted or confirmed by their Ministry. *What is our Hope, our Joy, our Crown of Rejoicing,*

1 Theff. ii.
19.

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are not even ye in the Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his Coming? But if any of you should be found such as would not obey the voice of their Teachers, nor incline their ears to receive Instruction, in an unconverted, unregenerate State, how dreadful will be your meeting with them, when all the Advantages you had for your souls by their means will only serve to inflame the Reckoning, and they themselves must bear their testimony against you. But,

2. Another thing I would suggest to you is what follows in the Words after the Text: *Jesus Christ is the same* ver. 8. *Yesterday, to Day and for ever.* Christ is the same, not only as to his Doctrine, which is everlasting Truth, which shews us the only and unalterable method of Salvation; but he is the same in respect of his Divine Nature, the unchangeable God; and in respect of those offices, which he ex-

cutes as Mediator, ever was and will be the Prophet, Priest and King of his Church. Hence we may infer for our Comfort, that tho' his Ministers are not suffered to continue long by reason of Death, yet that he will take care of his own Interest, he will preserve a seed to serve him; and as he has appointed Ordinances, so while there are any purposes of Grace to serve by them, he will see that they shall be continued, and such be raised up from time to time as he will qualify for the Dispensing them. Besides we may expect that he will be the same to us, that he has been to others, while we take the same Course that they did. As the Merit and Virtue of his Death and sufferings can never be impaired, so the Treasures of his Grace can never be exhausted. *He is able to save unto the uttermost all them that come to God by him.* That Grace which was sufficient for others to maintain and promote good Habits in their souls, to support them under their Burdens,

Burdens, to fortify them against Temptations, to carry them through all the Difficulties and Snares of Life, and at last through the Valley of the shadow of Death, and to fit them for Glory, is every way sufficient to conduct us thither. And he will be with us, as he was with them, while we are concerned to walk in the same way that they did, till at length we are together with the Lord, no more to be separated either from him, or from one another for ever.

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Burdens to fortify them against Temptations, to carry them through all the Difficulties and Strata of Life, and to lead through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and to fit them for Glory, is every way sufficient to conduct us thither. And he will be with us, as he was with them, while we are concerned to walk in the same way that they did, till at length we are together with the Lord, no more to be separated either from him, or from one another for



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